

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

A PERSPECTIVE ON UNITED STATE POLICY  
TOWARD THE ARAB GULF COUNTRIES AND IRAQ

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The views expressed in this student academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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## ABSTRACT

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This study represents the author's analysis of American policy toward the Arab Gulf and Iraq. Many Americans may not agree with my perspective, but such perspectives are widespread in the Gulf region and merit the consideration of American readers. After careful research, it is the author's opinion that American policies toward the region have always been based on a number of parameters and variables that were characterized by continuity. The events of September 2001 caused important changes in the United States' national security policy, which led it to initiate aggressive foreign policies toward Islam in general, and Arabs in particular. I will present what I consider the most important parameters and variables that have guided American policy in the region.

Relations between the United States and the region were stabilized for a long period because of a US agenda focused on Arab oil and the Arab-Israeli conflict. I will also present what I feel are the most important US objectives in Iraq and the Middle East, including its ends, ways and means. To conclude, this study will discuss what the author believes American policy should refrain from doing, and make suggestions as to what the policy should be doing that it currently is not.



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## A PERSPECTIVE ON UNITED STATE POLICY TOWARD THE ARAB GULF COUNTRIES AND IRAQ

Does an American policy toward the Arab Gulf region and Iraq exist? The Arab Gulf been important to the United States since at least the emergence of the US as a global power in 1945 and has continued to date. Each American administration since that time has formulated different policies for maintaining and defending U.S. interests in the area. In 1957, for example, the Eisenhower Doctrine stated that, "The United States of America warns that the communist enemy in the Middle East constitutes a serious threat to its vital interests. It has expressed its readiness to use the Armed Forces to respond to any direct aggression against this area." Over two decades later, the Carter doctrine noted forcefully that, "The United States considers any attempt aimed to control the Gulf Region an attack on its vital interests... and will return such attack with the various means available, which includes military forces."<sup>1</sup>

The American policies toward the Gulf region have been based on a number of parameters and variables that were often characterized by continuity. Some of these are based on the general characteristics of the international system, in which the US plays a major role. Others are based on the belief that the Gulf region should be treated as a "Rim Land"; the domination thereof would cause a drastic change in global strategy, an idea adopted by Speakman "American Strategy in International Policies include information in SRP". He said that controlling the Gulf region means controlling Europe, Asia, and America, and that controlling these continents means controlling the world. This importance is further enhanced by the world's increasing dependency on oil produced in the area. At some point within the next two decades, these oil reserves, especially those in Iraq and the Caspian Sea, may be the only sources of oil-based energy left in the world.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the emergence of Iraq from international sanctions and dealing with its location, political system, oil, civilization and culture represent two of the most important factors on the American policy map. The serious changes in the Iraqi regime will impose many liabilities on American foreign, political, economic and military policies.

The events of September 2001 caused a sharp turn in the US national security policy, based on what many Muslims viewed as the pretext of resisting terrorism and protecting U.S. national security. The Bush Administration initiated aggressive foreign policies toward Islam in general, and Arabs in particular, under the pretext that Arab countries, including friendly Arab countries, support terrorism. This challenge occurred despite the fact that these countries are among the first harmed by terrorist activity. The US approach therefore dangerously avoids the truth. This assumptions behind these policies needs to be reviewed and corrected because they

do not serve the United States, as Muslims and Arabs have been allies and friends for many decades. Yet many Americans may not understand why Muslims view these policies as war on Islam, and this must therefore be explained. Some U.S. leaders have advocated moving beyond Iraq and changing various regimes with Islamic-oriented governments including those that have adopted Islamic constitutions. Many Muslims are also concerned that the U.S. favors secular regimes such as Turkey and Tunisia while maintaining a barely concealed contempt for those states governed by Islamic principles and law. Additionally, the US is often viewed as hostile to Islamic political parties even when those parties scrupulously adhere to proper legal procedures. It is also especially offensive to many Muslims when the US seeks to limit the right of Islamic parties to participate in their own government following democratic elections as has occurred in Turkey and Sudan. In addition, US attempts to deny a number of Islamic countries the right to acquire strategic weapons for deterrence capabilities is seen as a double standard such as in the case of Pakistan, Libya and the focus directed towards Iran. This perception occurs because of the lack of US objections to Israeli nuclear weapons systems while this country is engaged in repression against the Palestinians and other Arabs. Many Muslims are also troubled by the consistent demand on various Arab countries to modify and secularize their educational curriculums, with special emphases directed towards the religious module because the US leaders believe that this part encourages, and calls for terrorism. The US is also seen as legally prosecuting Islamic organizations and societies, banning their activities and freezing their funds and arresting individuals under the false claim of countering terrorism by prosecuting and hence eliminating the sources. By treating Islam and Muslims as though they were all part of al Qaeda is insulting considering that the difference between them clear and big.

#### **THE AMERICAN POLICY BETWEEN IDEALISM AND REALISM**

In general, there is dissociation in the American policy, which is irrational if we examine the most important basis of logic: the law of non-contradiction. The American strategy was based on the methods of the American policy, from the period of independence, to the Wilson doctrine, to the views of forgiveness and cooperation in Carter Administration, all of which are idealist doctrines representing the conscious inspiration of American foreign policies.

The rights of self-determination and non-intervention in internal affairs of all colonized countries, as well as countries that are deemed weak are considered good examples of idealism in American foreign policy<sup>3</sup>. The United States is also considered one of the greatest democracies in the world and has the greatest democratic institutions that have organized and shared the administration of American internal and external policies. Americans have called for

democracy as a life doctrine, unifying the world and lifting peoples from oppression. In the practical application of American foreign policy, however, the United States has interfered in many regions of the world where it has supported dictatorships and totalitarian regimes. This approach has deprived the United States of credibility and has provided for the enmity and distrust of the people in those regions, as well as in some cases taking bias attitudes by providing what is widely perceived as uncritical support for Israeli policies in the region.

#### **PARAMETERS AND VARIABLES THAT AFFECT AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD THE ARAB REGION**

What are the most important parameters and variables that American policy has used in the region? The US has been, and still is, the world's sole superpower following the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. This situation, according to some commentators, has provided the US with a historic opportunity to fulfill its grand strategy, becoming hegemony, imposing its values on the whole world, and stabilizing its interests<sup>4</sup>.

Arab-American relations date back to when the Moroccans were the first nation to recognize U.S. independence and have never been severed. The U.S. established strong cultural relations with some of the Arab countries during the era of the Ottoman Empire. This is seen by the creation of the Syrian-English College in Beirut in 1866, which later became what is currently known as the American University. The University disseminated Western political and intellectual approaches to knowledge throughout the Middle East, giving rise to nationalistic feelings, ideology and liberal principles. Also, the founders of the American University helped to convince the American President Woodrow Wilson to send the King-Crane Commission to the Arab East after the First World War. This committee adopted the idea of establishing a unified Arab state, adding Palestine to Syria, contrary to the 1917 Balfour declaration in which Britain had offered a "national homeland" in Palestine for the Jewish people.

Both parties' relations were stabilized for a long period of time, as a result of an agenda focused on Arab oil, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and international challenges—namely the Soviet challenge that the U.S. faced and the Zionist challenge that the Arab world was facing.

Arab-American relations nevertheless have ranged between improvement and deterioration, according to the general circumstances surrounding them. These relations greatly improved when the Administration of President Dwight Eisenhower objected to British, French and Israeli behavior during the Suez War in 1956. They relapsed into problems after only one year when the same Administration announced the Eisenhower Doctrine, which was widely viewed as a policy aimed at western domination of the region . US-Arab relations again tangibly improved during the Kennedy Administration in the early sixties, but once again declined during

the Johnson administration at the end of sixties and early seventies primarily because of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and the position taken by the USA on that war.

What are the most important variables that have caused changes within American policy toward the Arab region?

#### INTERNATIONAL VARIABLES:

The emergence of a new international system, led by the U.S. after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the defeat of Iraq in 1991, is when the international community adopted two different views: 1) the “pessimistic view,” regarding the U.S. as another dominating power, using force and suppression against other weak countries to achieve its objectives. In the absence of a peer competitor, (such as the old Soviet Union, it will practice this policy in the future. Some of the supporters of this viewpoint, however, believe that the United States is a compassionate hegemonic power that works for the international society’s welfare. The second view considers the new international system to be a complicated and compound system established in a manner that prevents any superpower from achieving world domination. The international system is not any more dominated by one pole, as Huntington claims, and the US cannot impose its wishes and act unilaterally.<sup>5</sup> The supporters of this viewpoint consider the international system to consist of three basic bases, military force, economic power and cultural power. Concerning the political side, the United States enjoys the position of a great and hegemonic international force, whereas on the economic side has serious competitors. However, by remaining a cultural and ideological power with influence distributed throughout the world, in a way, refutes the meaning of hegemony and being unipolar. The important factor here for the purpose of this study is how the new role of the United States reflects on Arab-American relationships. The thing that attracts attention in most analyses and strategies deals with the U.S. role in the international system. The US gives its relationship with Arab countries a special role and considers the Arab region to be a special challenge to the West. This position gives the US an excuse to act without limitations against the advent challenges in the region. For this reason, some academics (such as Joseph Nie, Director of John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and Harvard professor Samuel Huntington) have advised the U.S. ruling elite that they should refrain from direct interference in other international regions and leave the international security to the territorial powers and congregations, with the exception of the Arab World<sup>6</sup>.

## AMERICAN VARIABLES:

The most prominent changes in American policy are:

**The Return of Conservatives to Power:** The Bush Administration came to power with the support of some influential anti-Muslim religious leaders such as Rev. Jerry Fallwell, who is known for his adoption of extreme domestic and foreign policies, for example being one of the supporters of the Greater Israel project<sup>7</sup>. This ideological trend is directly related to the Arab-American relationship, and is mainly based on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the war against Iraq, and the U.S. relationship with conservative Arab countries, especially those of the Arab Gulf. Such a country is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is accused of being too lenient with international terrorism. The extremists have a solid attitude toward these cases and this attitude **brought the policy of renewal (united passionate Imperialism) of (the responsibility of passionate men)** as described by one of the top writers of Washington Post<sup>8</sup>. In the articles of such writers, we find that the Arab Region is the most likely to be a field on which to test the expected American imperialism. In this manner, the US policy reflects the theory that Richard (Is this the full name? Do you mean Richard Perle?) calls Limited Sovereignty of National States.<sup>9</sup>

To Arab countries, limited sovereignty means unlimited leadership and the unabated interference of the United States in the affairs of these countries. Nowadays, the closest example of this is embodied in the American demands from Syria and its intervention in the affairs of Syria and Lebanon.

**Increasing American Dependency on Arab Oil:** The US imports 53% of its oil from abroad, out of which 21% consists of Arab oil, and it is expected that this percentage will rise to more than 62% before 2020<sup>10</sup>. This percentage is increasing in light of the depletion of oil reserves in non-Arab countries<sup>11</sup>. Realistically, this is why last May, while offering the new American National Energy Strategy, President George W. Bush announced that "the increasing dependency on only one source of oil, especially if such a source was a foreign source, shall leave us always subject to sudden surges in prices and discontinuation in supply, and above and worst of all, extortion." In fact, Iraq holds the second largest oil reserves after the Saudi Arabia and this, as any observer would realize, is the secret underlying the American fears of the discontinuation or obstruction of its oil imports from the Arab region. This situation also justifies their resort to military power for maintaining and ensuring the continuity of the American oil supplies.

**The Qualitative Development of the Pro-Israel Lobby's Influence over the United States:** In the past, this lobby labored to gain its influence from outside American governmental and administrative organizations, but now the Zionists have become a partner in the country's

governance by playing a principal role in the formulation of the American position toward Arab countries. Having 245 former associates of pro-Israeli organizations in the Clinton Administration is enough to prove the extent of Zionist lobby influence, from the lowest level employee to the Secretary of State (Madeline Albright), even including Dennis Ross, Martin Indik and Aaron Miller, who were in charge of American policy in the Middle Eastern and Arab countries. Henry Kissinger began planning the control of the Administration and Congress when he held position of Secretary of State. He started purifying the administration, especially the State Department, of people who were called "Arabists" by the pro-Israeli Lobby. These Arabists were people employed by the State Department who were not supporters of Arabs, but rather people who adopted a neutral attitude toward the Arab- Israeli conflict. Thus, it is not strange to find that Dennis Ross played an important role in preparing the circumstances for the Second Gulf War (1991), during the administration of President George H. Bush, and also played a biased role, supporting Israel in the Palestinian case. He then became the director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, which is among the most important pro-Israeli institutes in Washington. The neo-conservatives in President G.W. Bush administration have an especially ambitious approach to using military force against Islamic governments for what they believe and not because they are a threat to the United States. This approach is especially clear in the writings of Richard Perle, a former Bush advisor who may still have an important role in shaping American attitudes toward the Arab States<sup>12</sup>.

#### ARAB VARIABLES:

The Arab variables are due to the escalation of the Arab-Arab struggles and differences, and to the collapse, after the second Gulf War in 1991, of the Arab Cooperation Council and the Arab-North African Countries Federation.

**Arab Economic Conditions:** The increase in some of the Gulf Oil countries' foreign debt, as seen by the US, through their weak economic performance, their incomplete structures, and the growth of unemployment rates, constituted an incentive encouraging the US to expand its sphere of interference by making changes in the Arab region.

**Double Pressure on the Arab Countries:** The first is the seemingly unlimited aid extended to Israel and the tremendous pressure exerted on the Arab countries to accept solutions to the Palestinian issue, in accordance with Israeli views. Second is pressuring the Arab Gulf oil producing countries to respond to American requirements in a form that serves American policy, in so far as the oil pricing and exporting are concerned.

## **THE AMERICAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES IN IRAQ AND THE MIDDLE EAST**

What are the most important U.S. objectives in Iraq and the Middle East? The US is a hegemon with vital interests all over the world, including the Middle East—characterized by its vital strategic position and its regional resources.

The most important strategic objectives of the US in Iraq and the Middle East are:

**The Domination of Oil Sources in Iraq and the Arab Gulf Region:** Taking into consideration that America, as well as other exporting countries' oil reserves shall be depleted in the near future, one can easily see that American dependency on Gulf oil will witness a significant increase in the coming decades.<sup>13</sup> This is a serious indication of danger, which is why the American administrations have been laboring through several means, to ensure the continuity of this main source of power and energy. Before 1973, the United States had friendly relations with the oil producing countries. The 1973 Arab-Israeli War, however, and the massive strategic Airlift to Israel, proved that the USA did not have continuous friendly and mutual relations with Arabs. As a result, Arabs were forced to use oil as a means of pressuring the United States into being neutral and supporting Arab rights, rather than supporting, Israel which occupied Arab territories. Since then, the USA began planning to ensure oil by military means; security and defense treaties were made after the 1991 war of the liberation of Kuwait. This was one of the reasons for military presence in the region, which still serves several strategic goals. The first goal is ensuring the flow of oil to the United States of America. The second is controlling the oil prices according to the American companies' and government's requirements. A third goal is limiting and restricting OPEC's role in the determination of the quantities offered in markets and their prevailing prices. A fourth goal, and the most dangerous of all, is exercising pressure on the industrial countries in Europe, Japan and China, in particular which is the giant competitor, which needs many energy resources to meet its industrial needs if it continues to grow.

**The Protection of Trade Routes and Maritime Passages, and Keeping them Open:**

Assuming that the U.S–Iranian tension will continue, we find that the US will never permit and, in fact, will prevent any kind of threat against such routes and passages, the most important of which are the Strait of Hormoz, the Strait of Bab Al Mandab and the Suez Canal. The United States needs these routes and passages to remain open in order to transport oil and trading goods and because they connect Europe with Asia. This is why there is clear American presence in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Bab Al Mandab, and the Red Sea region. One can also see distinguished facilities in the Sultanate of Oman, as well as the military fleets present in the Arab Gulf, Indian Ocean, and the Mediterranean Sea.

**Protection of Israel:** Since 1948, Israel was able to play its role as a strong barrier against the expansion of communism. It also succeeded in playing the role of an advanced base and front in the region for the United States in any real military confrontation between the two superpowers<sup>14</sup>. Also, due to the strong presence of the influential Zionist lobby within the American decision-making centers, Israel received almost unrestricted military support from the US and thus was able to realize qualitative supremacy over all the Arab countries combined, which ensured and protected its security (and still does) to the maximum possible levels. In addition to the US support in all the international conferences, the United States used its United Nation's veto power many times against international decisions that blame Israel for its aggression against the Arabs. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the US administration continued the military manufacturing of weapons, which played an important role in American decision-making, especially when the president was a Republican<sup>15</sup>. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a perceived need in some quarter for an alternative enemy. Studies and research were actively done, especially by pro-Israeli writers that realized that the Soviet Union's fall ended the justification for the US military to support Israel, which could lead the USA to respond to the peace process and solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. If we interpret Samuel Huntington's book, and what he foretold in *The Clash of Civilizations*, he depicted the image of the enemy that the American administration was trying to find. It suggested that the coming conflict would be between the USA, Islam and China, despite the fact that the Arab countries and their relationship with the United States would not affect American interests in the Islamic world.<sup>16</sup>

#### **THE DESIRE TO GENERALIZE THE IRAQI MODEL AND THE IMPACT ON THE POLITICAL MAP IN THE REGION**

Many reports discussed the imminent change in the Middle East, but only a few of them were correct. As background, we would like to present some of these reports. For example, the U.S. agreed with the lack of organization and discipline in the Middle East (not democracy). Taking into consideration that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict did not threaten strategic balances, the interest in the Middle East laid only in the oil and Israeli security. On the contrary, the unsettled conflict served the USA by allowing it to have all concerned parties under its control. The USA was surprised when the attack of 11 September 2001 took place, which was attributed to the organization Al-Qaeda, led by Osama Bin Laden and his followers in the Arab region. This convinced the United States that it could not be lenient with Arab countries and their people, who harbor feelings of enmity toward US policies and are threats to Israel and the oil regions. It is possible but very unlikely in the future that a non-conventional attack against the

United States by the Arab countries may take place<sup>17</sup>.. If what is in this report is correct, it is easy to imagine the objectives of the American administration during this era. Therefore, the following American course of action in the area can be achieved:

**The Strategic End: Middle East Reformation:** There are three dimensions representing the general formula, if it is to succeed in Iraq. The first is to create a small country model for each of the region's countries. This model renders each country to be incapable, through the available national capacities, to be an independent country capable of defending itself and its national security with all its resources. This dimension is based on a very important requirement that calls for full and complete partnership with the US. Therefore, the USA would like to see independent states that need its support and defense. The second is the siege on Islam, moving it outside the influential sphere it has on the cultural values of the region, and replacing the values with those of American democracy. A solution that some Arabs and other political opposition thought would solve all the internal and external problems of these countries is dependent upon the application of democracy. Such democracy must ignore the civilized heritage of the people of these countries, neutralizing the impact on the cultural values exported to the region and controlling how the values that comply with Islam and not against it are selected and received. The third is the elimination of the Arab identity in the region by replacing the Arab system with a Middle East system, and ensuring the acceptance of some other parties that were historically isolated, such as Israel and Turkey.

**Ways:** The collapse of the Soviet Union and the events of 9/11 caused the world to sympathize with the U.S., which opened the door for it to have several choices in achieving its strategic ends in relation to its aforementioned three dimensions. First, is the small state model. It is a model preventing the individual aspirations and permitting a certain country in the region to dominate all the other countries within the same region. This is the way the United States used to view Iraq's role in the region. Second, the U.S. sees that Iraq will better prosper as a nation and a state in a world of democracies, rather than the other regimes. Third, the Middle East system would be achieved by putting an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict so the countries in the region would focus on development and actual normalization of relationships with the State of Israel, and the promotion of the mutual dependency relationships in order to minimize the opportunities for the revival of conflict. This will enable Israel to include its economy, which is supported by the U.S., technology, and industry, in these relations. Thus, Israel will have a leading role in the region, keeping individual states far from the idea of Arab unity. Consequently, the role of the Arab league will be eradicated. The USA does not want the dream of Arab unity to be achieved, otherwise Samuel Huntington's prophecy in *The Clash of*

*Civilizations* and the conflict expected with Islam, which cannot be achieved except with united Arab leadership, would be true.

**Means:** All the choices for American policy, including the political, economic, and finally, the military means, are wide open in order to achieve the strategic end for its three dimensions, for example, the elements of national power. The Bush Administration, however, was in a hurry because of the rapid changes and transformations taking place in the international environment. The US wanted to prove its domination over the whole world, and to select a model for its new policies and apply them in different parts of the world. As for the Arab countries, especially those in the Arabian Gulf, the USA has looked for justifications since the 1970's to make new changes in the region. Iraq, therefore, was chosen for this change and made into a model to be restructured by hard power. The Bush Administration also selected Iraq for effecting such change therein, and for making it a model in the area it intends to reform and reconstitute. The resort to military means and the invasion of Iraq commenced the implementation of the necessary change. But let's question what is taking place in Iraq. Will the situation allow America to make this change or will the Iraq problem change this objective?

What is the Iraqi model that the U.S. desires to generalize in the region? Firstly, American policy sees that the regimes in the Arab Gulf countries are not democratic regimes and thus it should introduce democracy to their people. Such democracy, however, must consist of American characteristics, which they believe will be successful in Iraq. The U.S. will urge the Arab countries to accept and adopt the same characteristics so as to be more acceptable and more capable in adapting to the upcoming transformations. Secondly, in the Iraqi model the U.S. works to introduce and support the secular system, separating religion and politics. This, however, is a difficult issue because the United States thinks that the Islamic religion was the reason behind the terrorism that the US is fighting. In order for these countries to have full democracy, they should face and fight not only led terrorism, But also political Islam, which happens to be the state religion of these countries. Thirdly, such democracies would treat Israel with an open mind, through the normalization of relationships, and open their markets to Israeli products. Such democracies would also be loyal to the United States through the defense, security, and economic relationships that would exist between the countries. Moreover, these countries should cease their relations with the Arab league, or leave the relations as they are now—a formality only. The ultimate objective of these is to keep the Arab countries within the sphere of the American political, economic, and security powers, and to influence those states for the longest time possible

**The anticipated role of Iraq within the GCC council in regards to containing Iran:**

What is the anticipated role of Iraq within the GCC council in regards to containing Iran and its threats of controlling the Gulf Region?

Since Mosaddaq's revolution in the 1950's, the ouster of the Shah of Iran, and the rise of an Islamic Republic, Iran has constituted a worry to U.S. policy in the region. Iran continued to threaten the northeastern coast of the Arabian Gulf. The Iranian threats against the Arabian Gulf countries continued by trying to blackmail these countries politically, economically, and geographically, until the end of 1970's. During the reign of Shah, the Iranian people suffered from difficulties concerning poverty, unemployment and poor quality of life standards. Savak, an internal security organization trained by the CIA, and accused of violent and murderous practices against Iranian nationals, which eventually lead to a change in the ruling system and the emergence of the evolution that was exploited by Ayatollah Al-Khomeini. Al-Khomeini was able to take advantage of the state of frustration that the Iranian people, who believed that religion was the solution for all problems. The Shiite sect believed that religion and loyalty to the nation were very essential, and in reality, no researcher can predict the consequences of such beliefs. The religious revolution broke out in Iran to such an extent that the Shah, the US, and the West in general, were unable to halt it. This led to an overnight change, converting Iran into an ideological state governed by religion. Iran has changed from a state protecting American vital interests in the Middle East into a dangerous power that threatens these interests, especially Gulf oil and Israeli security. Decision makers in the USA began studying this situation in order to contain it. They tried to penetrate this new regime by sending some leaders who cooperated with The U.S ,like Abu Al- Hassan Bani Sadr and Shahboor Bakhtiyar , but accepted by Khomeini, to discuss mutual interests between the two countries, and to soften the statement that Khomeini issued about the USA being the "Great Satan." The USA also believed that the new Iranian religious threat to the South Western coast of the Arabian Gulf had to be stopped. To do this, the USA supported Iraq through the GCC countries that were threatened by Iran. As a result, the First Gulf War broke out between Iraq and Iran and lasted eight years. Both Iraq and Iran were exhausted economically and left with heavy debts. When Saddam invaded the Arab Gulf country, Kuwait, it was a service for the USA because it justified, at the request of concerned Gulf countries, the presence of the United States in the region. As a matter of fact, the presence of American forces in the region was intense, similar, in a way, to their presence in Germany after World War II.

Iran managed to concentrate on military support and investment, including in the area of non-conventional weapons. It initiated strong relationships with the Soviet Union and Asian

countries in order to bridge the gap between those countries that have historical and security ties with Iran. Once again, Iran opposed American interests, this time in Middle Asia and the Caspian Sea region.

As a result, the USA exerted efforts to abort Iranian developmental projects and to eliminate the Iranian security role in the Gulf region. After the decline of the Soviet Union, the USA discovered that Iran was emerging as a threat to its interests, and would also continue to be a threat in the future, for the following reasons:

Iran controls the Straits of Hormoz and the Islands controlling the Arabian Gulf, which were previously occupied by UAE and ignored by America and the western countries. Iranian control of these threatens the flow of oil and its supplies. The control also depends on the ability of Iran to impose threats, and on the regional and international conditions.

The US accused Iran of being a country that harbors terrorism. The most dangerous aspect in this issue is the support of the Iraqi resistance against the American presence in Iraq, which neighbors Iran. If Iran is truly supporting the resistance in Iraq, then its intention is to play an effective role in the settlement and security of a new Iraq that the USA would reject. America, however, considers that Iran's support for the Iraqi opposition is based on religious reasons, such as Shiite religious communities from Iraq that are now in Iran, and the possibility of creating problems for the occupying military in various regions in Iraq, and in the Middle East in general.

The Iranian, Syrian, and Lebanese coordination is represented by Hezbollah and Palestinian organizations such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The USA believes that the route from Tehran to Baghdad, Damascus, and Gaza represents opposition to its policies in dealing with the Iraqi and Palestinian issues and the continued biases toward, and the assistance to Israel encourages Israel to practice organized state terrorism against the Palestinians.

The Iranian nuclear issue constitutes a great worry to the United States. The USA tries to pressure Iran, claiming that it is trying to manufacture a nuclear bomb. This is a threat to US interests in the region and in the world, as well as a threat to Israel. I believe that this exaggeration comes from Israel, who is supported by the new conservatives in the American Administration. Despite the fact that Israel owns nuclear power thatAY05 Resident Curriculum threatens the neighboring countries, American policy turns a blind eye to it.

The USA desires to confront situations in the Middle East, especially in the Arabian Gulf region and Iraq, and to face the Iranian threat and weaken it as follows:

## **THE EXPECTED IRAQI ROLE**

Iraq is expected to help reconstruct the Arab Gulf region into a new form with an American style. This will be done through the establishment of democratic entities led by elites loyal to the US, who adopt western secular ideological trends and announce their hostility toward the ideological policies of Iran; preventing cooperation therewith and imposing an economic siege thereon.

It is also expected to include the democratic Iraq in the GCC member states, followed by the development of the Peninsula Shield Forces. American armament is playing a defensive security role with the prime function of protecting American interests and of facing the Iranian threats, not in Saddam's way, but in its own American way.

The US also wants to separate the Arab Orient from Arab Africa, and weaken its countries, especially Egypt, whose current leadership has not realized that it is on America's and Israel's agenda for weakened regional influence.

## **CONCLUSION**

America has realized the importance of the Middle East and the Arabian Gulf region and has followed a foreign policy that does not coincide with its foreign policy directed toward other regions of the world. This policy concentrated on two main factors: Gulf oil and Israeli security. US policy applied many strategies, but these strategies, which were executed through the years by the different government administrations, realized the importance of this region to American national security. They considered any intervention in the region to be harmful to American interests and considered it an act of aggression against the USA itself, an act that would be met using all means necessary, including military forces.

The US-Arab relationship has oscillated between ups and downs, depending on positions the US took, but they have never been as bad as they are now. Relations are at an all time low for reasons such as the American administration's biased support for Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict (the Palestine issue). This was the result not only of the occupation of Israel and the Jews Palestine, but also of the American decisions represented by Congress and the American administration. This causes frustration among the Arab people and creates enmity for this part of American policy that is difficult to overcome without a change in the policy.

There is no justification for the enmity that the American administration has toward Islam or for stamping American policy with the Zionist ideological impression of the Armageddon myth. By doing this, it increases the gap between the USA and the Arabian Gulf states, despite the fact that these countries accept the American policies in general, and have developed a

friendship and made defense and security agreements with the US. However, the USA gives the cold shoulder to the Arab Gulf states and accuses them of harboring terrorism. In addition, it imposes a military presence that the nations cannot accept. This is one of the main factors that sooner or later will threaten, directly or indirectly, American interests and harm them in the long run.

American policy in the Arab Gulf and Iraq is based on their strategic location, their vital sources of energy, and the changes that took place in relationships in general. Below I will summarize the recommendations for American policy, based on the above, as follows:

From what should American policy refrain?

American policy should NOT continue hostilities against Islam, as per the US media, and its principles and values. The US must not accuse it of being a religion of terrorism, must not pressure the Arab regimes with Islamic ideological trends. These regimes, in fact, have supported the US in all international forums for about 50 years. On account of religious beliefs and feelings, Islam was the shield on which the US depended to curb the expansion and spread of communism as an ideology. Since Islam represents an integrated social system for the Arab and Islamic people, the USA must not deny the religion and its people. American policy must understand the paradox that Islam means peace, tolerance, while at the same time glorifying Jihad in the case of self-defense.

The US should not excessively support Israel at the expense of Arab rights, and should be serious about putting an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict , through a two state solution , which is the main issue in the region. The USA should abide by the principles of justice in this conflict and support the rights of the Arab and Islamic people. Arabs and Muslims realize that on account of US support, Israel does not abide by international laws. It practices state-supported terrorism in the Palestinian territories. The USA should support and assist the Palestinian people in restoring their historical rights to the land of Palestine. The United States should also realize that the hatred is toward US policy, not toward the American people. This hatred is a result of a firm belief by every Arab and Muslim that the American policy, since Kennedy, has not once supported Arab rights. This led to the belief that pro-Israeli American decisions are , imposed by the American administrations that control American decision-making, without the awareness of the American people.

It should not pressure Arab countries and tear apart the Arab entity with idea of "Greater Middle East."

The US should refrain from militarizing American policy, as this gives the appearance of old style imperialism, which was fought against by all nations and abolished by all cultures. In

addition, the connection of American policy with the use of military force embodies the most hateful aggression and, consequently, incurs the hatred of such strategy, which depends on murder, fear and destruction, by the people of the region. Regardless of what the message these armies project on the tanks and aircrafts is, it is rejected, and this will result, in the end, in the isolation of the USA.

It should not seek to impose American values on the people of the region, as this is unacceptable because it is considered to be interference in people's internal affairs and cultural heritage.

The United States should look at the Arab States as equals in this partnership; decision makers should know that without a balanced partnership, hatred toward American policies will increase and US interests will remain threatened. Without such a partnership, there will come a day in which the US will lose these interests because of its arrogant policies and its biases toward Israeli actions in Palestinian territories .

The media campaign and the direct declarations against the Arab countries, in particular those that have members in Al-Qaeda are understood by the general population as hostile acts against these countries and their peoples, and not against the specific organization.

The US, having joint interests in the region with friendly and allied countries, should not follow a hegemonic policy, as the other countries would be obliged to follow a similar hostile policy of their own.

What should American policy encourage doing that it is not currently doing?

The USA, in order to maintain true credibility within the Arab World, in particular within the Arab Gulf States, should support the idea of defining terrorism so the international community would be able, with such a definition, to determine the party exercising terrorism, whether it be individuals or a state. This will facilitate the international community's resistance to such terrorism. It should also determine what the reasons are for fanaticism in connection to terrorism, and what is required to avoid them. Are they attributed to political differences that are exaggerated by media means, and as such, are affecting the societies and causing fanatic groups to develop? Is it necessary to avoid fanaticism, developing a strategy with concerned countries in order to avoid and protect the society in the future against fanaticism that results in terrorism? Also, what changes are the countries required to adopt, and if these changes are not applied, what consequences will there be?

The United States should seriously pressure Israel to submit to international will and move in the direction of solving the Arab-Israeli conflict according to internationally legitimate decisions, with the active participation of the European Union in solving the problem by not

complying with Israeli extremism. The US should continue pressuring to stop nuclear programs in the region, including in Israel. It would be considered a mistake and irrational to allow Israel, the most aggressive entity and the most threatening to all the states in the region, to remain a nuclear power. Stopping Israel's nuclear program would help make the Middle East a region free of weapons of mass destruction, similar to other territories that have already achieved this goal, and would allow the region and its people to enjoy a real security.

The United States must deal with Arabs gathering on the expanse of an Arab Homeland, which contains all the Arab countries as they are now. An Arab Homeland, with all of its characteristics, would be, in a way, much better than the idea of a Large Middle East, which would contain all the GCC countries, Iraq, Turkey, and Israel. Large Middle East would be disrupted by religious and ethnic conflicts. Turkey and Israel would fight to lead the region, but neither shares the traditions and language of the others. This would cause more internal turmoil in the region and would poorly affect American interests, especially when it is clear that the United States would support particular parties over the interests of other ones.

The US should immediately withdraw from Iraq after securing the Iraqi environment because the military occupation is hateful and draws resistance through violence and counter-violence. There is no doubt that what the American forces are experiencing in Iraq is bitter and sacrifices the lives of the American people's sons and daughters without justification. What has been achieved, however, is nothing more than a quick failure in all measures. It could have been possible for an active and rational policy to achieve honorable results for the United States without bloodshed, but the continuation of the current situation makes the hatred for US policy towards the region worse, increasing resistance, which has negative influence on American interests and also on the relations with the people of the region.

The US should continue to encourage democratic reformations. There is no doubt that these reformations will be on behalf of the American policy, but the peoples of the region, not the Americans, should determine the form of democracy without US intervention in regional decisions.

The United States and other countries of the region share vital interests that should not be affected by the current American policy. Consequences from the policy's negative effects could lead the regional countries to replace the US with other foreign countries that have the same vital interests.

The media should be used by the United States in an affirmative way, supporting American idealist doctrines and values that are the dreams of humanity and that have an influence over all states. The media is also supported by ideology that had spread in the past

and had been accepted, at least in part, by everyone. The ideology was neglected, however, by the American media, which created enemies who had not previously existed.

The United States should have a policy where they are seen by friends and allies as supporting the international community and mending the gap between the policies. As it is now, the US see other countries as alienating themselves because the policies of these countries do not coincide with those of the United States. The rest of the international community, however, sees this as reversed—the US is alienating itself for policies that oppose those of the international community.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Fawaz Girges, *How the American Policy toward the Arabs Is Made* (Beirut, Arab Unity Center For Studies, n.d.), 6.

<sup>2</sup> Wiliam F. Engdah," Iraq and the Problem of Peak Oil," 2004, available from <<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/ENG408A.html>>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Girges, 29.

<sup>4</sup> Hussein Agha, Felman, Ahmad Khalidi, and Zeev Schiff, *Diplomacy : Lesson from the Middle East* (Cambridge : MIT press, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clashes of Civilizations, and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 157-174.

<sup>6</sup> Center for Arab Unity Studies , *Parameters and Variables* (Beirut: American Relations from Arabic Perspective, n.d.), 8.

<sup>7</sup> Girges, 38.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.,42.

<sup>10</sup> Agha, 53 .

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.,54.

<sup>12</sup> Paul Findley, Congressman. *They Dare to Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press Incorporated, 1989).

<sup>13</sup> Engdahl.

<sup>14</sup> Girges, 38.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>16</sup> Huntington, 23.

<sup>17</sup> Stephen Zunes, "A History Lesson: US Intervention in the Middle East Has Always Ended Up Being a Disaster for American Interests;" available from <<http://www.commondreams.org/views03/0210-07.htm>>; Internet ; accessed 12 October 2004.



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